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ABSTRACT

This curriculum unit, developed by the Oregon Elementary English Project, is intended for use with fifth and sixth graders as a guide for writing. Included are discussions of the various marks of punctuation and the rules for using them, the use of capitals, writing dialog and paragraphs, and the mechanics of letter writing. The guide can be used as a basis of class instruction, as a reference for the student to use by himself, or as a work which the teacher may refer the student to. In addition to an introductory section for teachers, student exercises are provided for each area of study. (See CS 200 482 through CS 200 498 for related documents.) (HS)

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Language Curriculum, Grades V - VI

ROAD SIGNS TO WRITING

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Teacher

ROAD SIGNS OF WRITING

PURPOSE:

To provide students with some information about, and practice in using, the more important mechanics of writing: punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, letter writing, etc.

BACKGROUND:

The theory underlying the material in this handbook is that the mechanics of writing serve as guides to help writers make clear what they are saying and to help readers understand what is being said. It should be recognized that these devices are conventions, or customs, which develop when culture develops a writing system, not sacrosanct rules handed down by some authority. Many of them are quite arbitrary devices which are useful because we all assign the same meaning to them. For example, we all recognize that when we come to a period followed by a word beginning with a capital we have come to the end of one sentence and the beginning of another. It isn't the period and the capital that make the end and beginning. They simply indicate what is there already and thus facilitate our interpretation of the written word

Punctuation marks do in writing what rising and falling pitch, various pauses, and the grouping of words between pauses do in speaking. In spoken language, we have no trouble recognizing the beginning and ends of sentences, or the division between various parts of a sentence. But when we write, such natural devices as pauses and changes of pitch are missing. Punctuation and capitalization supply the clues which tell us quickly what we would recognize naturally if we heard a sentence spoken.

SUGGESTIONS FOR USE:

Road Signs of Writing is a kind of elementary handbook for fifth and sixth graders, to be used as a guide for writing. It includes: discussions of the various marks of punctuation and the rules for using them; the use of capitals; writing dialog and paragraphs; and the mechanics of letter writing. It can be used either as a basis of class instruction or as a reference for the student to use by himself, or for the teacher to refer him to. It should probably not be taught at a time when you are primarily concerned with stimulating students to write creatively. But after they have written, there should be a time for talking about putting their writing into accepted forms used by our culture.

In using the handbook you may want to select from the various sections to fit the needs of your group, or you may want to proceed through the book from beginning to end. A table of contents will help you locate specific sections.

Each section includes exercises for practice. These exercises usually require students to write sentences or paragraphs out and put in punctuation. We have used this method, rather than the usual workbook method where they can simply add the punctuation to something already written out, because we believe the latter approach becomes quite mechanical. The former will require the student to think more about why the punctuation marks or the paragraphs or the capitals are needed.

You will find a key to the exercises at the end of this discussion. If you use the handbook for individualized instruction, letting students proceed at their own pace, you might want to make the key available to them to check their work as they proceed. The following comments are directed toward specific sections of the handbook.

PUNCTUATION:

By far the largest section of the handbook is devoted to punctuation. The rules presented are the more common rules that are generally accepted as standard. You should bear in mind that it is possible to find many exceptions and variations to the rules commonly followed, even among very competent writers. Often alternative ways of punctuating are possible. Therefore, punctuation should not be taught dogmatically. But until students have acquired more experience and sophistication in writing than they are likely to have at the fifth or sixth grade level, they should be encouraged to learn what the generally accepted rules are and to follow them. They should be led to think of punctuation as an aid to understanding. It is presented in this light in this handbook. Punctuation, of course, is related to the structure of a sentence. That is, the various marks are used at various structural points: to mark the beginning and the end; to separate parts of the same sort; to show natural breaks between one part and another; etc. The discussion in the handbook tries to relate punctuation whenever possible to what the student knows about the structure of sentences. Each of the punctuation rules discussed is set off in a box for emphasis and ease in locating.

Punctuating the Beginnings and Ends of Sentences.

Though it is usually clear when a sentence is a question because of word order, many exclamatory sentences could also be interpreted as statements. Only when we hear an exclamation pronounced can we be sure of the meaning intended. Therefore, you may have some differences of opinion about the exclamatory sentences in the Exercise for Practice on p. 2.

Punctuation Inside Sentences.

Commas between parts of a compound sentence (p. 4). It is customary to use a comma before coordinating conjunctions (such as and, but, for, or, nor) when they join parts of a compound sentence, but you will find many

competent writers omitting the conjunction when each part is very short. Students should be encouraged to use the comma, however. (In the exercise on p. 5 it is possible to choose other conjunctions for some of the sentences than the ones we have used in the key.)

Commas to separate parts of a series (p. 6). In punctuating parts of a series, some writers use a comma before the and (John, Bill, and Henry) and some don't (John, Bill and Henry). We have used the comma before the and in the handbook to avoid confusing students with two alternatives, but you may want to mention that it is sometimes left out. Emphasize that the parts of a series are all the same kind of parts.

Commas following introductory parts (p. 8). It is customary to use a comma after introductory adverbial elements, but in common practice the comma is often left out when the introductory element is very short.

A semicolon before joining words like however (p. 13). Words like however, nevertheless, therefore, etc., are called conjunctive adverbs because they are often used to join two sentences, and they also qualify the relation between the two sentences (the two parts of a compound sentence). Students probably don't use them much, and this section is introductory in nature, to be used with students who use such words and need it.

The hyphen (p. 15). Teaching the use of a hyphen at the end of a sentence should be tied to what students know about syllables.

The apostrophe.

Contractions (p. 16). You might want to contrast the contractions they're and you're with the words that sound like them but are spelled differently and have different meanings: your and their and there.

Possessives (p. 16). Students sometimes have trouble writing possessives. Emphasize the fact that in writing a possessive they should start with the noun before it becomes possessive and then add 's or just ' in case it is plural and already ends in s.

Quotation marks (p. 19). For students who have trouble with quotation marks, you might want to bring in comic strips and have them transfer the words in the balloons into sentences with quotation marks.

The section on indirect quotations may be difficult for some students. Use it if appropriate.

WRITING ABBREVIATIONS (p. 23) AND WRITING TIME, DATES, AND ADDRESSES (p. 24)

These sections are chiefly to refer students to if there is a need. You might want to encourage students to refer to the sections on their own if they have questions.

CAPITAL LETTERS:

This section is primarily for reference, also.

WRITING PARAGRAPHS:

The emphasis in this section is on how paragraphs help readers understand how a piece of writing is organized and help them to keep the various parts straight. Organizing writing into paragraphs also helps writers sort out their thoughts about a subject. The treatment is very simple, the main concept being that each paragraph is built around one idea and that each develops a general statement by supporting details. No attempt is made to talk about the various kinds of development that are possible. You should, however, find it useful to tie the writing of paragraphs to a general kind of plan (or outline) students might prepare before beginning to write.

KEY TO EXERCISES

Exercise for Practice, p. 2

1. Do you sell fishworms here?
2. The little man with the pointed cap was selling balloons.
3. The kitten ran up the tree and jumped onto the roof.
4. Has anyone seen my shoes?
5. The bridge is falling! (A period would also be correct.).
6. The school children spent their recess picking up litter.
7. Can you see the whites of their eyes?
8. Who took the hands off the clock?
9. Put on your brakes! (Could also be a period.)
10. Most bears hibernate during the winter.
11. The school is on fire! (Could also be a period.)

Punctuation of paragraphs, p. 3

1. Have you ever seen a spotted simbo? It lives alone in the middle of the forest. Every four years all the simbos get together for a party.

2. The golden egg was kept on the mantlepiece. One day the children knocked it off and it fell into the fire. Suddenly it began to glow in the hot ashes and the shell fell apart. Out of it came a large bird with gold feathers.

3. When the honey bee returned to the hive she began to run around in circles. She went first one way then the other. The other bees followed after her and felt her with their feelers. Suddenly they all began to leave the hive and fly off in the same direction. Where were they going?

4. Sindbad drifted off among the trees until he came to a spring of water. He sat down beside it and ate a few biscuits he had brought with him. Then he cupped his hands and drank from the spring. When his thirst was satisfied he leaned back against a tree and went to sleep.

5. No one knows who he was. Millions of people know his name because Robin Hood was the most famous outlaw who ever lived. For hundreds of years men have sung songs and told stories about Robin Hood and there have been books and plays about him too. Other men who fled from the law have been called Robin Hood. Not one of them was so brave or so gay or so loved as the Robin Hood who robbed the rich and gave to the poor.

6. Was there ever a real live Paul Bunyan? There may have been. He might have been a husky young man in a logging camp who did a piece of hard work. After he moved on to another job maybe the other loggers kept on telling stories about him. Maybe the stories got bigger and bigger and spread to other parts of the country.

Exercise for Practice, p. 5

1. The cat walked by himself, and all places were alike to him.
2. All the animals gathered together around the fire, and they wondered what it could mean.
3. The cat waited for the other Wild things, but no one moved in the Wild Wild Wood.
4. The cat counted the dog's teeth, and they looked very pointed.
5. Each winter the sun leaves the land in darkness, and next year a new sun returns.
6. The father of Keesh was a very brave man, but he had met his death in the time of famine.
7. Keesh came proudly into the village, for he had brought much fresh meat.
8. They waited for him to come into the council, for they looked upon him with respect.
9. He was only a young boy, but he was able to hunt wild animals.
10. Old Vix no longer wandered in the woods, but none of us ever forgot her.

Exercise for Practice, p. 6

A. 1. Jane and Jim had an exciting trip to Yellowstone.

2. Robinson Crusoe and his man Friday lived on a desert island for years.

3. Pandora knew about the box but would not go close to it.

4. Zeus shortened the spring and divided the year into seasons.

5. They brought many beautiful flowers and brightly colored leaves.

B. 1. Zeus was chief of the gods, and Athena was goddess of wisdom.

2. The town mouse had fine food to eat, and the country mouse lived on beans and bacon.

3. The king was selfish, and he was often very cruel.

4. Loki was dressed as Freya, and Thor was dressed as her maid.

5. The hunter was jealous, and he decided to pick a quarrel.

6. The wind blew very hard, and the sun shone down with great warmth.

Exercise for Practice, p. 7

A. 1. John Jones has lived in New York, Chicago, and Memphis.

2. On the camping trip, please bring a sleeping bag, a sack lunch, and a canteen.

3. We visited in Singapore, in Honolulu, and in Tokyo.

4. The brown dog, the white cat, and the spotted rat all lived together.

5. My favorite foods are corn on the cob, chicken with dumplings, and ice cream with chocolate sauce.

6. The winners were the dog with the curly tail, the cat with the red ribbon, and the pink-eyed rabbit.

7. Most of us like to swim, to hike, and to play ball.

8. Easter, Christmas, and Halloween are all holidays.

9. Among the rulers of the world are the president of the United States, the prime minister of England, and the king of Jordan.

10. We will start when you have fed the dog, put out the cat, and turned off the light.

B. Answers will vary, but the sentences should include the underlined parts together with commas in the following examples.

1. Jack ran to the corner, turned around, and came back.
2. Our neighbors own a white poodle, a black spaniel, and a brown collie.
3. At the zoo we saw wildcats, jaguars, and panthers.
4. Mother looked in front, behind, and underneath all the furniture.
5. Fourteen Fords, twenty Buicks, and ten Chevrolets were loaded on the railroad car.
6. A man with a dog, three children, and a stray cat were sitting on the dock.
7. Bob listened for a minute, went to the phone, and called the police.
8. We always play baseball in March, in April, and in May.

Exercise for Practice, p. 9

1. In New Zealand, many people raise sheep.
2. Quietly, he took his place.
3. At the stroke of midnight, the coach turned into a pumpkin.
4. With fear and trembling, he tiptoed up the stairs.
5. After the bell rang, he remembered his lunch money.
6. Before crossing the street, always look both ways.
7. When he had finished bringing in the wood, Marvin went out to play.
8. When they discovered that Cinderella was the beautiful princess, the wicked sisters were very angry.
9. In the Northwest, they found many beautiful rivers.
10. Where the Clearwater River joins the Snake River, Lewis and Clark made a camp.
11. When he put his hand in the box, one of the mice bit him.

Exercise for Practice, p. 10

1. I wish, Mary, that you would pay attention.
2. Mr. Jones, can I have three tennis balls?
3. Dr. Smith, please call the hospital.
4. I think you will win, Hank.
5. Put your book away, Harry.
6. Stan, who are you going to vote for?

Exercise for Practice, p. 12

(The sentences in A can be joined in either of the ways shown in the braces. In some, other conjunctions are also possible.)

A. 1. The big bear peered down at us with its huge head swaying from side to side {; / , but} its eyes showed neither anger nor fear, only curiosity.

2. It took Robinson Crusoe over a month to make a board for a shelf {; / , but} a carpenter with tools could cut six of them in half a day.

3. Robin Hood and all his men were outlaws {; / , but} all the people in the country loved them because they helped everyone in need.

4. Clouds hung low over the little house and spread over empty prairie; rain and snow fell and were driven by the wind.

5. The little fire crawled slowly to meet the racing big fire {; / , and} suddenly the big fire swallowed the little one.

B. 1. Spot ran limping down the street; he barked fiercely at the mailman.

2. Joe has a blue-eyed cat with hardly any tail, and his sister has a dog with one white ear and one brown one.

3. He chose the material for his model carefully, but the directions were too difficult.

4. Portland, Oregon; Seattle, Washington; and San Francisco, California are three beautiful cities.

5. We always brought the equipment in at night; in the morning we took it out again.

Exercise for Practice, p. 14

1. Fern was up at daylight; consequently, her father gave her a pig.

2. The pig was a runt; so Fern fed it with a baby bottle. (Comma is also possible.)

3. Every day was a happy day, and every night was peaceful.

4. Wilbur tried to follow the directions; he couldn't, however, run downhill and uphill at the same time.

5. It was still only four o'clock; nevertheless, Wilbur was ready for bed.

6. Wilbur didn't want food; he wanted love.

7. There can be no mistake about it; a miracle has happened.

8. Everybody knew that a sign had appeared in a spider's web; therefore, people came for miles around to look at the web.

9. Charlotte's trick was working, but the fair was much too crowded.

Exercise for Practice, p. 15

1. These are your instructions: go to the corner, look both ways, then cross the street.

2. The game will be played either at 2:30 or at 3:00.

3. There is an old saying that you should remember: haste makes waste.

4. The flowers were of every color: red, blue, pink, yellow, purple, white.

5. The explanation is simple: he wasn't looking where he was going.

Exercise for Practice, p. 15 at bottom

can - yon	teach - er	broth - er	high - way
com - ma	ex - am - ple	build - ing	fam - i - ly
sis - ter	re - port	to - geth - er	ex - er - cise

Exercise for Practice, p. 16

you'll	doesn't
he's	you're
isn't	we're
aren't	she's
wasn't	they're

Exercise for Practice, p. 17

1. It is George's raccoon.
2. It is the boy's goldfish.
3. It is the man's car.
4. It is the children's playground.
5. It is the women's clubhouse.
6. It is the dog's bone.
7. It is the plumber's wrench.
8. It is the gardener's rake.
9. It is the mouse's cheese.
10. It is the baby's bottle.

Exercise for Practice, p. 18

A. 1. They are the birds' nests.
2. They are the teachers' books.
3. They are the babies' bottles.
4. They are the doctors' thermometers.

5. They are guides' maps.

6. They are the horses' saddles.

B.

cat's	sailor's	friend's	lion's
cats'	sailors'	friends'	lions'
mouse's	sister's	driver's	cousin's
mice's	sisters'	drivers'	cousins'

C. 1. They are the drivers' helmets.

2. It is the driver's helmet.

3. It is the lady's umbrella.

4. They are the ladies' umbrellas.

5. It is the team's trophy.

6. They are the teams' trophies.

7. They are the policemen's guns.

8. It is the policeman's gun.

9. It is the wolf's cub.

10. They are the wolves' cubs.

11. It is my kite.

12. It is his monkey.

Exercise for Practice, p. 20

A. Pip said, "I just read something that amazed me."

Then Pip asked, "Do you know that we spend 1/3 of our lives sleeping?"

Squeak answered, "Some of us spend 9/10 of our lives sleeping."

Cat said, "I'm going to pretend I didn't hear that."

B. (The first part of each sentence may vary, but the parts in quotation marks should be like the following.)

1. The teacher said, "We will get out early today."
2. One boy asked, "Who will bat first?"
3. The policeman said, "You were doing eighty!"
4. The girl said, "Let's go to the movie."

Exercise for Practice, p. 21

1. Peter said, "I forgot my lunch money."
2. "You'll have to go hungry then," said Paula.
3. The principal announced, "You won't have recess today."
4. "I think," said Roger, "that dogs are friendlier than cats."
5. The weatherman said, "It will snow before night."
6. Father asked, "Did your team win?"

Exercise for Practice, p. 22

1. The reporter said that the results will not be known until tonight.
2. Mary asked what she should do now.
3. Father said that first we would clean our room.
4. Mike said that he was very excited.
5. Our leader said that today we are going to make plans for the hike.

1. We wondered, "Will anyone be home?"
2. Bill said, "The fire was out when I got there."
3. The little boy asked, "Have you seen my dog?"
4. My sister said, "You can ride my bicycle."
5. Carrie said, "I have seen a hummingbird."

Exercise for Practice, p. 29

People can communicate by talking to each other. When they are very young they begin to learn how to speak words and how to put them together into sentences. By talking, they can tell each other anything that they can think about.

People can also communicate by writing. In this way they can communicate with people who are far away. They can leave messages for people who will live much later. Many of the things that people read were written by people who lived long ago.

People can communicate some things to others without saying a word. They do it with facial expressions and gestures. For instance, the expression on our faces can tell others whether we are sad, angry, happy, or afraid. By waving we can say goodbye. By clapping we can say that we like something. By shrugging our shoulders we can say that we don't know.

Exercise for Practice, p. 31

"Now, Mrs. Queen," he said, "for the last time--what is my name?"

"Are you called Johnny?" she said.

"No."

Then she asked, "Is your name Harry?"

"No again."

The queen walked up to the dwarf and said, "Then perhaps your name is Rumplestiltskin!"

The dwarf screamed, "Who told you that? The devil must have told you that!"

PUNCTUATION

When we drive on the streets and highways we follow certain "rules of the road." Road signs tell us what these rules are. They tell us when to stop and when to go; when to slow down and when we can go fast. Road signs tell us many other things as well. They help us know where we are and how to get where we are going. It would be hard to drive without them.

When we write we also follow certain rules that everyone understands and has agreed to follow. Some of these rules are called punctuation rules. Punctuation marks are the road signs of writing. We use them because they help us read what other people have written. They also help others to read what we have written.

Test this out by deciding which of the following paragraphs is easier to read:

> when tom smith started home he wondered if his dog would be waiting for him that morning sandy hadnt. been around the house seemed strange without him tom had looked for him until time to go to school anxiously tom hurried faster and faster as he got closer to his house just as he turned the last corner he heard a little whine and there was sandy looking very tired wagging his tail and shaking all over where have you been old boy tom asked sandy didnt answer

> When Tom Smith started home, he wondered if his dog would be waiting for him. That morning Sandy hadn't been around. The house seemed strange without him. Tom had looked for him until time to go to school. Anxiously, Tom hurried faster and faster as he got closer to his house. Just as he turned the last corner, he heard a little whine, and there was Sandy looking very tired, wagging his tail, and shaking all over. "Where have you been, old boy?" Tom asked. Sandy didn't answer.

Did you find the second paragraph easier to read? If you took a little time you could probably have figured out where the sentences began and ended in the first paragraph because you can recognize sentences. But the punctuation marks help you figure them out quickly.

Punctuating the Beginnings and Ends of Sentences

Punctuation, then, is something that helps us when we read and write, not when we talk and listen. When we talk, the way we use our voice gives clues to our listeners about where a sentence begins and where it ends. But when we write, punctuation gives the clues to help our readers along.

We mark the beginning of a sentence with a capital letter.

We can show the end of a sentence with periods, question marks, or exclamation marks.

1. Most sentences are telling sentences. We put a period after them.

2. Some sentences are asking sentences, or questions. We put a question mark after them.

3. A few sentences express great excitement or strong feeling. We put an exclamation point after them.

Exercise for Practice

Decide which of the following are telling sentences, which are asking sentences, and which are exclaiming sentences. Then give them the right beginning and end punctuation.

1. do you sell fishworms here
2. the little man with the pointed cap was selling balloons
3. the kitten ran up the tree and jumped onto the roof
4. has anyone seen my shoes
5. the bridge is falling
6. the school children spent their recess picking up litter
7. can you see the whites of their eyes
8. who took the hands off the clock
9. quick put on your brakes
10. most bears hibernate during the winter
11. the school is on fire

When each sentence is written on a different line, it is easy to tell where it begins and where it ends. It is when we write sentences together in paragraphs that we sometimes have trouble. The following paragraphs will give you practice in deciding where one sentence ends and another begins. At the beginning of each you are told how many sentences there are in the paragraph. Read each one and then put in the beginning and ending punctuation.

1. There are three sentences in this paragraph. Decide where each one begins and ends. Then copy the paragraph, punctuating it correctly.

   have you ever seen a spotted simbo it lives alone in the middle of the forest every four years all the simbos get together for a party

2. There are four sentences in this paragraph. Copy the paragraph and punctuate it correctly.

   the golden egg was kept on the mantlepiece one day the children knocked it off and it fell into the fire suddenly it began to glow in the hot ashes and the shell fell apart out of it came a large bird with gold feathers

3. There are five sentences in this paragraph. Copy it and put in the punctuation.

   when the honey bee returned to the hive she began to run around in circles she went first one way then the other the other bees followed after her and felt her with their feelers suddenly they all began to leave the hive and fly off in the same direction where were they going

4. There are four sentences in the following paragraph. Copy it and put in the punctuation.

   sindbad drifted off among the trees until he came to a spring of water he sat down beside it and ate a few biscuits he had brought with him then he cupped his hands and drank from the spring when his thirst was satisfied he leaned back against a tree and went to sleep

5. There are five sentences in this paragraph. Copy it and put in the punctuation.

   no one knows who he was millions of people know his name because Robin Hood was the most famous outlaw who ever lived for hundreds of years men have sung songs and told stories about Robin Hood and there have been books and plays about him too other men who fled from the law have been called Robin Hood not one of tnem was so brave or so gay or so loved as the Robin Hood who robbed the rich and gave to the poor

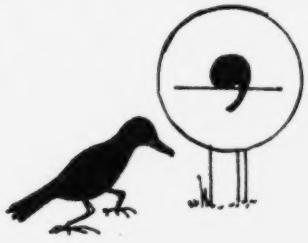
6. There are five sentences in this paragraph. Copy it and put in the punctuation.

was there ever a real live Paul Bunyan there may have been he might have been a husky young man in a logging camp who did a piece of hard work after he moved on to another job maybe the other loggers kept on telling stories about him maybe the stories got bigger and bigger and spread to other parts of the country

Punctuation Inside Sentences

Capital letters at the beginning and punctuation marks at the end of sentences help us to keep sentences straight, but there are other punctuation marks which we use inside sentences that also help us, especially if a sentence is long and complicated. In this section we will be talking about the kinds of punctuation marks that are used inside sentences.

The Comma



A comma is something like a flashing yellow light or a Go Slow sign. Such signs are often used where two roads come together. They mean, "Slow down and then go on." Commas are used where certain parts of a sentence come together. They help us to keep the parts separate in our minds. They should not be overused. You should learn the rules for where we use commas and should not use them in other places. Here are the main rules for using them and where they should not be used.

1. Commas between two sentences that are joined together to make one sentence.

Do you remember that we often join two sentences together to make one sentence? We hook them together with some little words called conjunctions. The ones used most often are and, but, for, or, yet. Here is an example:

George Washington was our first president + and +

John Adams was our second =

George Washington was our first president, and John Adams was our second.

The comma tells us right away that the sentence is made of two whole sentences joined together. Such sentences are called compound sentences.

> Remember: Use a comma before a conjunction to separate the parts of a compound sentence.

Exercise for Practice

On a separate piece of paper make compound sentences out of each of these pairs of sentences by joining them with one of the conjunctions (and, but, for, or, yet). Don't forget to put in the comma before the conjunction.

1. The cat walked by himself.
   All places were alike to him.

2. All the animals gather together around the fire.
   They wondered what it could mean.

3. The cat waited for the other Wild things.
   No one moved in the Wild Wild Wood.

4. The cat counted the dog's teeth.
   They looked very pointed.

5. Each winter the sun leaves the land in darkness.
   The next year a new sun returns.

6. The father of Keesh was a very brave man.
   He had met his death in the time of famine.

7. Keesh came proudly into the village.
   He had brought much fresh meat.

8. They waited for him to come into the council.
   They looked upon him with respect.

9. He was only a young boy.
   He was able to hunt wild animals.

10. Old Vix no longer wandered in the woods.
    None of us ever forgot her.

When the two parts of a compound sentence have some parts alike, we often leave one of the like parts out. For example, in the following sentence the part in the box can be left out.

Our cousins came on Friday, and our cousins left on Sunday =

Our cousins came on Friday and left on Sunday.

Now, instead of a compound sentence, we have a sentence with a compound part.

> Notice: We don't usually need commas before conjunctions when they simply join compound parts.

Exercises for Practice

A. Rewrite the following compound sentences, taking out one of the repeated parts. Remember to take the comma out too.

1. Jane had an exciting trip to Yellowstone, and Jim had an exciting trip to Yellowstone.

2. Robinson Crusoe lived on a desert island for years, and his man Friday lived on a desert island for years.

3. Pandora knew about the box, but Pandora would not go close to it.

4. Zeus shortened the spring, and Zeus divided the year into seasons.

5. They brought many beautiful flowers, and they brought brightly colored leaves.

B. Decide which of the following sentences need commas before and and which ones don't.

1. Zeus and Athena were Greek gods.
Zeus was chief of the gods and Athena was goddess of wisdom.

2. The town mouse had fine food to eat and the country mouse lived on beans and bacon.
The town mouse and the country mouse were cousins.

3. The king was selfish and he was often very cruel.
The king was selfish and very cruel.

4. Loki and Thor set out on the journey.
Loki was dressed as Freya and Thor was dressed as her maid.

5. The hunter was powerful and very accurate with his bow and arrow.
The hunter was jealous and he decided to pick a quarrel.

6. The wind and the sun had a contest.
The wind blew very hard and the sun shone down with great warmth.

2. Commas to separate parts in a series

Instead of two compound parts, we often list several of the same kind of parts in a series with a conjunction between the last two parts. We separate the parts of the series with commas. Here is an example:

Finches, juncos, and sparrows belong to the same family of birds.

The parts of a series can be single words, or each part may have several words. Here is an example:

He wandered down the road, across the field, and into the wood

Exercises for Practice

A. Find the parts in a series in the following sentences, and then rewrite the sentences putting commas between the parts.

1. John Jones has lived in New York Chicago and Memphis.

2. On the camping trip, please bring a sleeping bag a sack lunch and a canteen.

3. We visited in Singapore in Honolulu and in Tokyo.

4. The brown dog the white cat and the spotted rat all lived together.

5. My favorite foods are corn on the cob chicken with dumplings and ice cream with chocolate sauce.

6. The winners were the dog with the curly tail the cat with the red ribbon and the pink-eyed rabbit.

7. Most of us like to swim to hike and to play ball.

8. Easter Christmas and Halloween are all holidays.

9. Among the rulers of the world are the president of the United States the prime minister of England and the king of Jordan.

10. We will start when you have fed the dog put out the cat and turned off the light.

B. Write some sentences of your own using each of the following lists of parts as a series. Trade papers with a friend and check each other's punctuation.

1. ran to the corner
   turned around
   came back

2. a white poodle
   a black spaniel
   a brown collie

3. wildcats
   jaguars
   panthers

4. in front
   behind
   underneath

5. fourteen Fords
   twenty Buicks
   ten Chevrolets

6. a man with a dog
   three children
   a stray cat

7. listened for a minute
   went to the phone
   called the police

8. in March
   in April
   in May

Remember: Use commas to separate the parts in a series

3. Commas following introductory parts of a sen tence (parts before the subject NP)

Think for a minute about the way you put the parts of a sentence together. Usually sentences begin with the subject noun phrase which is then followed by the verb phrase. As you know, each of these parts may have only one word or they may have many words.

subject noun phrase	verb phrase
Children	ride.
All of the children	ride buses in the city.
All of the children on this block	ride buses at this time.
All of the children on this block	ride buses when the weather is nice.

Some of the parts that follow the verb in the verb phrase can be moved to the beginning of the sentence. We do this especially with parts that tell when or where or how or even because. Sometimes it makes our sentences more interesting to do so. When we move a part to the beginning, we usually put a comma after it. Here are some examples:

All of the children ride buses in the city.

In the city, all of the children ride buses.

All of the children ride buses at this time.

At this time, all of the children ride buses.

All of the children ride buses when the weather is nice.

When the weather is nice, all of the children ride buses.

He drove the car through the tunnel very slowly.

Very slowly, he drove the car through the tunnel.

He didn't work because he was lazy.

Because he was lazy, he didn't work.

> Remember: When a part of the sentence that usually comes after the verb in the verb phrase is put ahead of the subject, we usually put a comma after it, especially if it is long.

Exercises for Practice

Decide if there are any parts in the verb phrases in the following sentences that could be moved ahead of the subject. Then rewrite the sentences, putting these parts at the beginning and putting commas where they belong.

1. Many people raise sheep in New Zealand.
2. He took his place quietly.
3. The coach turned into a pumpkin at the stroke of midnight.
4. He tiptoed up the stairs with fear and trembling.
5. He remembered his lunch money after the bell rang.
6. Always look both ways before crossing the street.
7. Marvin went out to play when he had finished bringing in the wood.

8. The wicked sisters were very angry when they discovered that Cinderella was the beautiful princess.

9. They found many beautiful rivers in the Northwest.

10. Lewis and Clark made a camp where the Clearwater River joins the Snake River.

11. One of the mice bit him when he put his hand in the box.

There are several words that are usually found at the beginning of sentences. They are certainly, surely, probably, yes, no. When they introduce a sentence, we usually put a comma after them. Here are two examples:

Certainly, I would like to go skiing tomorrow.

Yes, you are my friend.

4. Commas around the name of the person we are talking to

Often in conversation we mention the name of the person we are talking to. When we talk to Doug, for instance, about his new bicycle, we might say:

Doug, I like your new bicycle.

or

I like your new bicycle, Doug.

In these sentences, Doug isn't really part of the sentence. It is just the name of the person we are talking to. It is called a term of direct address, and we set it off with commas.

In the following sentence, though, Doug is the name of someone we are talking about. We might use this sentence whether Doug was there or not and the word Doug would be a necessary part of it. We would not use commas in this case.

I saw Doug at the swimming pool.

Exercise for Practice

Find the sentence in each of the following pairs that has a term of direct address. Copy the sentence and put in the needed punctuatio

1. Mary was looking out the window.
   I wish Mary that you would pay attention.

2. Mr. Jones can I have three tennis balls?
   Mr. Jones gave me three tennis balls.

3. Dr. Smith please call the hospital.
   Dr. Smith isn't in the hospital.

4. Hank is playing shortstop.
   I think you will win Hank.

5. Put your book away Harry.
   We met Harry at the store.

6. Stan who are you going to vote for?
   Stan will vote on the way home.

The Semicolon

Another punctuation mark used within a sentence is the semicolon. Like the commas, it is used where like parts are joined together. It is a double-strength joining mark used when something a little stronger than the comma is needed.

1. A semicolon to join the parts of a compound sentence.

As you know, when we put two sentences together with a conjunction to make a compound sentence, we use a comma before the conjunction. Here is an example:

The little black dog ran into the street, and
the driver jammed on his brakes.

Sometimes though, we leave the conjunction out entirely. In that case we must use a semicolon. Here are two examples:

The jeep came roaring down the street; it must
have been going seventy miles an hour.

Joe could hardly wait to play football; his brother
liked baseball much better.

Remember:	Use a semicolon between the two parts of a compound sentence if no conjunction is used.

2. A semicolon between parts in a series.

The parts of a series are usually separated by commas. But if each part already has a comma in it, we use semicolons instead of more commas between the parts in the series. This might happen when you used the names of several cities and their states in a series. Here is an example:

On his hiking trip, Jack went through Centralia, Washington; Eugene, Oregon; and Davis, California.

Remember:	Use a semicolon between the parts of a series if each part already has a comma.

Exercise for Practice

A. Combine the following pairs of sentences into compound sentences using a semicolon and conjunction or just a semicolon.

1. The big bear peered down at us with its huge head swaying from side to side.
   Its eyes showed neither anger nor fear, only curiosity.

2. It took Robinson Crusoe over a month to make a board for a shel
   A carpenter with tools could cut six of them in half a day.

3. Robin Hood and all his men were outlaws.
   All the people in the country loved them because they helped everyone in need.

4. Clouds hung low over the little house and spread over the empty prairie.
   Rain and snow fell and were driven by the wind.

5. The little fire crawled slowly to meet the racing big fire.
   Suddenly the big fire swallowed the little one.

B. Copy these sentences and add commas and semicolons where they belong.

1. Spot ran limping down the street he barked fiercely at the mailman.

2. Joe has a blue-eyed cat with hardly any tail and his sister has a dog with one white ear and one brown one.

3. He chose the material for his model carefully but the directions were too difficult.

4. Portland Oregon Seattle Washington and San Francisco Californi are three beautiful cities.

5. We always brought the equipment in at night in the morning we took it out again.

3. A semicolon before joining words like however.

Do you ever use words like however, therefore, consequently, and nevertheless? Sometimes these words are used to join two sentences together. If you watch, you'll probably find them often in your reading. They help to show how the sentence is related to an earlier sentence. If you ever use them when you write, there are two things to remember about them.

The first thing is that sometimes these words are stuck right into the middle of a sentence. In such cases, commas are used around them. Here are some examples:

Bill knew, however, that his father wouldn't want him to go.

He decided, therefore, to buy a model plane kit and stay home.

He wished, nevertheless, that he could have gone.

The second thing to remember about words like however is that sometimes they are used as joining words when two sentences are put together as a compound sentence. In such cases you should use a semicolon before them and a comma after them. Here are some examples:

It looked like rain; however, the picnic was held anyway.

One of our best players was missing; nevertheless, we won the game.

The wood was too wet to burn; therefore, we had to have a cold lunch.

People sometimes confuse words like however with joining words like and. When we join sentences with and, you remember, we can use a comma. But if we join them with however or therefore or nevertheless we should use a semicolon.

Remember:
1. When words like however are used between the two parts of a compound sentence, use a semicolon before them and a comma after them.
2. When words like however are used in the middle of a sentence, use commas on each side of them.

Exercise for Practice

Copy these sentences and put in the commas and semicolons where they belong.

1. Fern was up at daylight consequently her father gave her a pig.
2. The pig was a runt so Fern fed it with a baby bottle.
3. Every day was a happy day and every night was peaceful.
4. Wilbur tried to follow the directions he couldn't however run downhill and uphill at the same time.
5. It was still only four o'clock nevertheless Wilbur was ready for bed.
6. Wilbur didn't want food he wanted love.
7. There can be no mistake about it a miracle has happened.
8. Everybody knew that a sign had appeared in a spider's web therefore people came for miles around to look at the web.
9. Charlotte's trick was working but the fair was much too crowded.

The Colon

This little mark is called a colon. It is a mark that is often used to make an announcement. It announces that something is to follow which will explain or illustrate what has come before. Sometimes it is used to introduce a list. Here are some examples:

Tomorrow, please bring the following things from home: a small box, your lunch money, and a permission slip from your parents.

This is the rule you must remember: stay on the playground until the bell rings.

The room monitors have three duties: to take roll, to collect the lunch money, to answer the door.

A colon is also used when we use numerals to write time. For example:

School is out at 3:30, but it begins at 8:45.

We go to bed at 9:45.

Exercise for Practice

Find the places where a colon should be used in the following sentences, and rewrite them, putting the colons in.

1. These are your instructions go to the corner, look both ways, then cross the street.

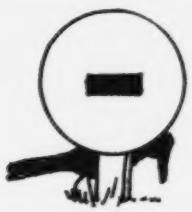
2. The game will be played either at 230 or at 300.

3. There is an old saying that you should remember haste makes waste.

4. The flowers were of every color red, blue, pink, yellow, purple, white.

5. The explanation is simple he wasn't looking where he was going.

The Hyphen



The hyphen is a little short line that is used in the following ways: When you come to the end of a line and have room for only part of a word, you can use a hyphen to show that the rest of the word will be on the next line. When you divide words at the end of a line, divide them between syllables.

Here is how you would divide the following words.

pen - cil	sto - ry	bet - ter
car - pet	chil - dren	ug - ly

Words with only one syllable should not be broken up. If you can't figure out where to divide a word, you can find out by looking in your dictionary.

Exercise for Practice

Write these words, putting hyphens to show where you might break them at the end of a line.

canyon	teacher	brother	highway
comma	example	building	family
sister	report	together	exercise

The Apostrophe

The punctuation mark on the sign looks rather like a hook, or like a comma, above the line. It is called an apostrophe. It has two uses in writing: when we write contractions, and when we write nouns that show possession.

1. Apostrophe in contractions.

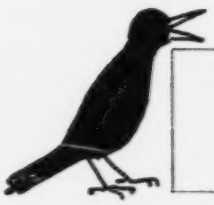
As you know, when we speak our language we often run two words together and leave out part of one of them. For example, we put do and not together to make don't. Can't is made by joining can and not and leaving out part of not. Such words are called contractions. We spell them with an apostrophe to show where the part has been left out. Here are some examples:

do + not = don't	I + am = I'm
can + not = can't	we + will = we'll

Exercise for Practice

Run the following words together to make contractions.

you + will =	does + not =
he + is =	you + are =
is + not =	we + are =
are + not =	she + is =
was + not =	they + are =



Remember: When two words are combined to make a contraction the contraction is always spelled with an apostrophe where something has been left out.

2. Apostrophes in nouns which show possession.

Some nouns show possession. For example in Bill's boat, Bill's shows possession. It means Bill has the boat.

In English we have a special way of showing possession. All nouns that show possession end with a sound we spell with s. And when we write these nouns, we use an apostrophe.

Here is how to do it. When you are writing nouns that show possession, if the noun is singular you simply add an apostrophe and s. And if it is a plural noun that doesn't already end in s, you also add an apostrophe and an s. For example:

The possessive form of cat is cat's. (cat + 's)

The possessive form of child is child's. (child + 's)

The possessive form of children is children's.
(children + 's)

Exercises for Practice

Rewrite each of the following sentences in the same way the first one has been done. Put the underlined noun in its possessive form.

1. George has a raccoon. It is George's raccoon.
2. The boy has a goldfish.
3. The man has a car.
4. The children have a playground.
5. The women have a clubhouse.
6. The dog has a bone.
7. The plumber has a wrench.
8. The gardener has a rake.
9. The mouse has some cheese.
10. The baby has a bottle.

Draw a circle around the nouns that are plural.

To write the possessive form of plural nouns that already end in s, simply add an apostrophe. For example:

The possessive form of girls is girls'. (girls + ')

The possessive form of players is players'. (players + ')

Notice:	The pronouns I, you, he, she, it, we and they have special possessive forms that don't use apostrophes. They are my, your, his, her, its, our, and their.

Exercises for Practice

A. Rewrite each of the following sentences in the same way that the first has been done. Put the underlined noun in its possessive form.

1. The birds have nests. They are the birds' nests.
2. The teachers have books.
3. The babies have bottles.
4. The doctors have thermometers.
5. The guides have maps.
6. The horses have saddles.

B. Write each of the following nouns in their possessive form. The first word in each pair is singular; the second is plural.

cat	sailor	friend	lion
cats	sailors	friends	lions
mouse	sister	driver	cousin
mice	sisters	drivers	cousins

C. Rewrite each of the following sentences in the same way that the first has been done. Put the underlined noun in its possessive form. You will have to decide if the word is singular or plural.

1. The drivers have helmets. They are the drivers' helmets.
2. The driver has a helmet.
3. The lady has an umbrella.
4. The ladies have umbrellas.
5. The team has a trophy.
6. The teams have trophies.
7. The policemen have guns.
8. The policeman has a gun.
9. The wolf has a cub.
10. The wolves have cubs.
11. I have a kite.
12. He has a monkey.

Remember: 1. If a noun is singular, or if it is a plural noun that doesn't end in s, make it possessive by adding an apostrophe + s.

2. If a noun is a plural noun that already ends in s, simply add an apostrophe to make it possessive.

Quotation Marks

1. Quotation marks with direct quotations.

Most people read comic strips. They know that the words written inside balloons are supposed to be the exact words spoken by the comic strip characters. For example, look at the following comic strip. Decide exactly what Pip and Squeak and Cat say.

PIP n SQUEAK n CAT
I just read something that amazed me.
Do you know that we spend 1/3 of our lives sleeping?
Some of us spend 9/10 of our lives sleeping.
I'm going to pretend I didn't hear that.

Sometimes when we write we want to repeat exactly what someone has said. We have a special way of showing the exact words that are spoken. Instead of putting the words in a balloon as the comic strip artist does, we put them inside of quotation marks. Quotation marks look sort of like pairs of commas, don't they? Of course they are up above the line instead of on the line. The first pair turns one way and the second pair the other way.

When we write a sentence in which we report the exact words someone has spoken, these words are called a direct quotation. Look at the following sentence and find out what other punctuation mark is used when we write a direct quotation in a sentence.

Benjamin Franklin said, "A penny saved is a penny earned."

Sometimes the direct quotation happens to be a question. Look at the following sentence and find out how we punctuate a direct quotation that is a question.

Ben asked, "Who took my shoes?"

Exercise for Practice

A. Look again at the Pip 'n Squeak comic strip and complete the following sentences with the exact words that are spoken. Put in all the punctuation marks that are needed.

Pip said _____

Then Pip asked _____

Squeak said _____

Cat said _____

B. Write sentences in which you report what each of the people in the following pictures says. Use all the punctuation needed.

Sometimes, for variety, we break up a direct quotation by putting the part about who said it in the middle. Look at the following sentence and find out how to punctuate a direct quotation that is broken up.

"A penny saved," said Benjamin Franklin, "Is
a penny earned."

If a direct quotation is made up of two sentences, here is how it can be punctuated.

"I hope the weather will be good tomorrow,"
said Bill. "We want to go camping."

or

Bill said, "I hope the weather will be good tomorrow.
We want to go camping."

Exercise for Practice

Rewrite the following sentences, putting in the punctuation that is needed.

1. Peter said I forgot my lunch money.
2. You'll have to go hungry then said Paula.
3. The principal announced you won't have recess today.
4. I think said Roger that dogs are friendlier than cats.
5. The weatherman said it will snow before night.
6. Father asked did your team win.

Sometimes we want to report what someone else has said, but don't want to use his exact words. This is called an indirect quotation. Here is an example:

Benjamin Franklin said that a penny saved
was a penny earned.

We do not use quotation marks with indirect quotations, but sometimes we have to make changes in the actual words that were spoken. Instead of Ben asked, "Who has taken my shoes?" we would write Ben asked who had taken his shoes.

Usually indirect quotations are introduced by the word that. But if the indirect quotation has been made from a question, other words are used. You have probably been making indirect quotations when you talk and already know without thinking about it what word to use.

Exercise for Practice

Rewrite the following sentences, changing the direct quotations into indirect quotations. Be sure to use the right punctuation.

1. The reporter said, "The results will not be known until tonight."
2. Mary asked, "What shall I do now?"
3. "First," said Father, "you will clean your room."
4. Mike said, "I am very excited."
5. Our leader said, "Today we are going to make plans for the hike."

Rewrite the following sentences, changing the indirect quotations into direct quotations. Be sure to use the punctuation that is needed.

1. We wondered if anyone would be home.
2. Bill said that the fire was out when he got there.
3. The little boy asked if we had seen his dog.
4. My sister said that I could ride her bicycle.
5. Carrie said that she had seen a hummingbird.

Remember:	Use quotation marks around the exact words spoken by someone. Separate the direct quotation from the rest of the sentence with a comma. Begin the first word in a direct quotation with a capital letter.

2. Quotation marks to set off titles.

When you write the name of a story or of a song or of a poem in a sentence, it is usually set off by quotation marks. Here are some examples:

My favorite poem is "The Cremation of Sam McGee."

My favorite fairy tale is "Beauty and the Beast."

The Beatles sang "I Wanna Hold Your Hand."

WRITING ABBREVIATIONS

There are some common shortcuts used in writing. They are called abbreviations. They are used by practically everyone who writes. Since we all know what they mean, they are very useful. We usually put a period after an abbreviation.

Below are some common abbreviations that you might be wanting to use:

1. Titles used with names of people.

Mr. for Mister (Mr. Jones)
Mrs. for Missus (Mrs. Jones)
Dr. for Doctor (Dr. Jones)
Gov. for Governor (Gov. Winthrop)
Pres. for President (Pres. Nixon)
Sen. for Senator (Sen. Kennedy)

Notice:	Abbreviations are capitalized if the word they stand for is capitalized.

2. Names of the states

Ala. for Alabama
Mass. for Massachusetts
Ore. for Oregon
Wash. for Washington
Ida. for Idaho
Nev. for Nevada
N. Y. for New York
Penn. for Pennsylvania
Cal. for California
N. J. for New Jersey
Wash., D. C. for Washington, District of Columbia

3. All the months but May have abbreviations.

Jan. for January
Feb. for February
Mar. for March
Apr. for April
Je. for June
Jul. for July
Aug. for August
Sept. for September
Oct. for October
Nov. for November
Dec. for December

4. Many of the countries have abbreviations.

Here are some examples:

U. S. for United States
Eng. for England
U.S.S.R. for Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Russia)
Fr. for France
Ger. for Germany
N. Z. for New Zealand
Den. for Denmark

5. The days of the week are often abbreviated.

Mon. for Monday
Tue. for Tuesday
Wed. for Wednesday
Thur. for Thursday
Fri. for Friday
Sat. for Saturday
Sun. for Sunday

6. Other common abbreviations1

oz. for ounce
lb. for pound
in. for inch
ft. for foot
tsp. for teaspoon
st. for street
ave. for avenue

WRITING TIME, DATES, AND ADDRESSES

1. When we write time, we use a colon between the number of the hour and the number of the minutes after the hour. We use the abbreviations A. M. for time before noon and P. M. for time after noon. Here are some examples:

11:30 A. M. or 11:30 a. m.

3:45 P. M. or 3:45 p. m.

2. When we write dates, we have two choices. One way is to write the name of the month, then the number of the day of the month followed by a comma, and finally the year. For example:

Oct. 13, 1952 or October 13, 1952

Another way is to write the number of the day of the month first, then the name of the month, and finally the number of the year. For example:

13 Oct. 1952 or 13 October 1952

3. Here is how we write addresses:

Addresses on an envelope or at the beginning of a letter.

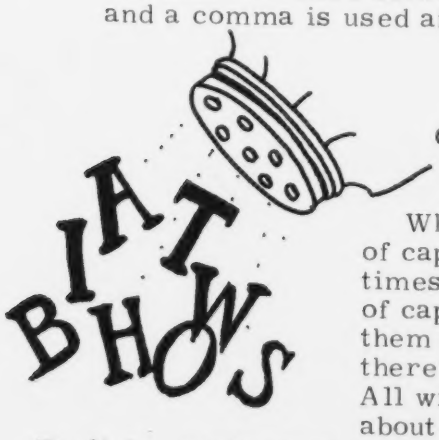
1415 N. Third St.
Boston, Mass.

Notice that the number of the street comes first; then the name of the street. Sometimes abbreviations are used for Street (St.), Avenue (Ave.). The name of the town and the state come on another line. A comma separates them. If the name of the state is abbreviated, a period follows it.

Addresses in a sentence.

We went to 1415 N. Third St., Boston, Mass., and found no one home.

As you can see, when you write an address in a sentence, commas are used between the name of the street and the town; and a comma is used after the name of the state.



CAPITAL LETTERS

When you look at a page of writing you see lots of capital letters among the small letters. Sometimes it looks as if someone had taken a shaker of capitals and sprinkled them over the page, letting them fall where they might. But you know that there are special places where we put capitals. All writers of English have a kind of agreement about where to use capital letters in writing English. Writers of other languages have different customs about where they put capitals. Here is where we use capital letters in English:

1. Using capital letters at the beginning of sentences.

One of the first things you learned about writing is that a sentence begins with a capital letter. The capital helps tell our readers where a new sentence is beginning.

2. Using capitals for proper nouns.

As you know, nouns are naming words. There is a special class of nouns that are names given to a particular person or thing. They are called proper nouns. Proper nouns are usually capitalized.

Here are the main kinds of proper nouns which you will capitalize, and some examples of each:

Names of people

Bill
George
Mary
Mr. Jones
Miss Bestor

Names of cities and towns

New York
Chicago
Albany
Chehalis
Coos Bay

Names of states

Washington
Oregon
Florida
New Hampshire
Texas

Names of rivers

the Mississippi River
the Missouri River
the Amazon River
the Snake River
the Columbia River

Names of mountains

the Rocky Mountains
the Alps
the Cascades
Mt. Hood

Names of countries

the United States
Canada
Spain
Mexico

Names of continents

Asia
Africa
North America

Names of the days

Monday
Friday
Sunday

Names of the months

January
February
September

Names of some holidays

Christmas
Easter
Fourth of July
New Year's Day

Names of streets

Third Avenue
Clay Street
Roosevelt Boulevard
Harbor Drive

3. Using capitals in titles.

When we write the titles of books or movies or plays or stories, we use capitals on all but the very small words. Here are some examples:

Hansel and Gretel
The Adventures of Robin Hood
Beauty and the Beast

4. The pronoun I is always written with a capital letter.

WRITING PARAGRAPHS

One way to keep our thoughts straight and help people understand what we write is by the way we punctuate sentences. Another is by the way we break our writing up into paragraphs. As you know, we show where paragraphs begin by indenting the first line of each new paragraph. We can also, if we like, leave a wider space between paragraphs than between the lines within a paragraph.

It is easier to read a page that is broken up into paragraphs than one that has no breaks, but paragraphs are used for a more important reason than just breaking up the page. Each paragraph is made up of several sentences which are closely related to the same idea. When you come to a new paragraph in your reading, it is usually a sign of a change in what is being talked about. Grouping our thoughts around main ideas and having a separate paragraph for each helps us to organize what we are writing. And the paragraphs help our readers to see what the ideas are.

The main idea of each paragraph can usually be stated in one sentence. And the paragraph is really an expansion of that one sentence. For example, here are three different paragraphs. Each one begins with a general statement. The rest of the sentences in that paragraph expand the ideas found in the first. They add some specific information to support or explain what the first sentence says.

> Porcupines don't have to worry much about enemies. Although they can't move very fast, they carry their protection along with them. They are covered with horny spines that are sharp as needles and have barbed hooks on the end. These protect them against even such fierce animals as wildcats and cougars.

Baby elephants are odd looking creatures. They weigh 200 pounds but are very soft and gentle. Although they are covered with wrinkles, they love to play like any other baby. Their short trunks and big ears give their faces a strange appearance.

Beavers are great engineers. They can make dams so strong that men and horses can walk across them. Some of their bridges are 100 yards long. To build their dams they sometimes use trees as much as 18 inches around. With their sharp teeth they gnaw around a tree until it becomes weak and falls. The beavers can tell in which direction the tree will fall and always get out of the way. Then they move the tree to where they want to use it.

Exercise for Practice

Here are some general statements. Choose one of these--or think of one of your own--and write a paragraph by adding some other sentences with specific details.

I have a funny pet _____.
My little brother (or sister) can be very annoying.
We took an interesting trip last summer.
Swimming is my favorite sport. (Or use some other sport.)
I have a strange job.
It was my worst day.
We had a scary experience.

When you write, it is usually a good idea to think a little before you begin and to make a plan so that you have some idea about what you want to say. Writing without some kind of plan is a little like making a long car trip without a road map. You can make the plan in your head, but some people like to jot down the general ideas they want to write about. Then they decide in what order they want to write about these ideas. What they end up with is a kind of outline. For example, here is a little plan, or outline, for writing about making pizza.

1. Collecting the ingredients
2. Preparing the pizza
3. Baking the pizza
4. Eating the pizza

And here is a composition made from this outline.

If you are going to make pizza you should get all of your ingredients together first. You will need a package of roll mix, some ground beef and tomato sauce, and some cheese. You can also have mushrooms, onions, olives, or pepperoni to put on the top. Most people also like to have parmesan cheese.

When you have collected the ingredients you should begin by preparing the sauce. Brown the ground beef, and then add the tomato sauce. Add salt and pepper and some oregano. While the sauce cooks, mix the roll mix and spread it out in a thin layer on some flat pans. Spread the sauce over the dough. Then grate the cheese and put it over the top. Finally, on top of all, arrange any of the other ingredients you have chosen.

Pizza should be baked in a very hot oven. Set it at about 400 degrees and when it is hot put the pizza in. It should cook about fifteen minutes. Look in after about seven minutes to make sure the crust is getting brown but not burning. If it seems to be getting too brown, lower the temperature a little. If it isn't browning at all, increase the temperature.

When the pizza is done, take it from the oven and sprinkle the parmesan cheese over it. Cut it into pieces and it will be ready to eat. You probably won't have to call people to the table. When they catch a whiff of your delicious pizza, they will be standing around waiting.

Did you notice that each of the main ideas is expanded into a paragraph? The paragraphs help us to see where one point ends and another begins. They also make it easy to see the order which the writer used in his composition.

Exercise for practice

The following composition has not been broken down into paragraphs. Read it and decide where the paragraphs should be.

People can communicate by talking to each other. When they are very young they begin to learn how to speak words and how to put them together into sentences. By talking they can tell each other anything that they can think about. People can also communicate by writing. In this way they can communicate with people who are far away. They can leave messages for people who will live much later. Many of the things that people read were written by people who lived long ago. People can communicate some things to others without saying a word. They do it with facial expressions and gestures. For instance, the expression on our faces can tell others whether we are sad, angry,

happy, or afraid. By waving we can say goodbye.
By clapping we can say that we like something.
By shrugging our shoulders we can say that we
don't know.

WRITING DIALOG

Sometimes we want to write about a conversation two or more people have. We want to write exactly what they say. This is called writing dialog. You know, of course, that you put the exact words that are used in quotation marks. But there is also something else that we do to help our readers. We start a new paragraph every time the speaker changes. Read the following dialog and notice how it is punctuated. The paragraphs will help you notice when the speaker changes.

"It was a big pack," Pa said. "All of fifty wolves,

they could."

From Laura Ingalls Wilder, Little House on the Prairie. Copyright 1935 by Harper & Row.

Exercise for Practice

Here is a dialog between a little man called Rumplestiltskin and the queen. Copy it and start new paragraphs to show when the speakers change.

"Now, Mrs. Queen," he said, "for the last time--what is my name?" "Are you called Johnny?" she said. "No." Then she asked, "Is your name Harry?" "No again." The queen walked up to the dwarf and said, "Then perhaps your name is Rumplestiltskin!" The dwarf screamed, "Who told you that? The devil must have told you that!"

WRITING LETTERS

Almost everyone has to write a letter now and then. The kind of letter we write depends on who we are writing to and why we are writing.

Just as there are many styles in the clothes we wear, there are different styles in writing. When we go to church we usually dress differently than when we are going on a picnic. We might say that we dress more informally for the picnic.

When we write to our friends or family, we write <u>personal</u> letters; in these we can write very informally. We don't have to worry much about the form of our letter. But if we are writing a letter to someone we don't know, or someone we want to impress, we write a more formal letter. Such letters are sometimes called <u>business</u> letters.

So we can talk about the parts of a letter, we need to give them some labels. Here is an example of a personal letter with the various parts labeled.

HEADING → 1425 Wood Ave.
Crowville, California 92570
March 5, 1972

SALUTATION → Dear Bill,

BODY → I see that your school's team will be playing here on next Friday. If you are coming to the game, I would like to invite you to stay with me. Please let me know.

Your friend, ← CLOSING

Joe ← SIGNATURE

There are five parts in the letter.

The HEADING gives the address of the writer and the date on which the letter was written. Notice how the address is punctuated.

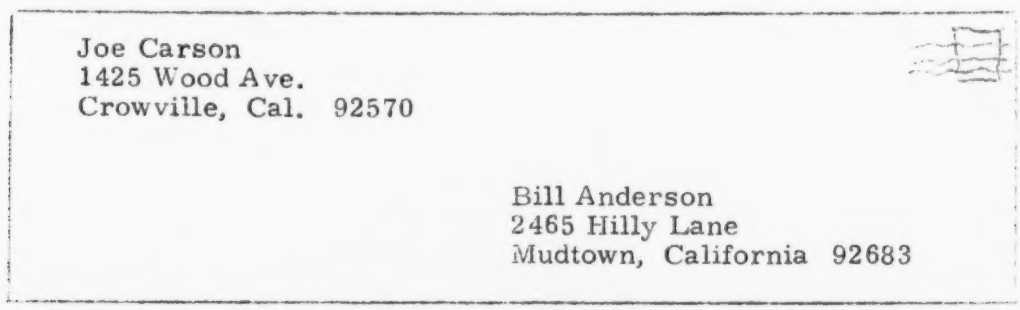
The SALUTATION is the part of the letter that greets the person being written to. It is like saying, "Hello," when you meet someone. In personal letters, we put a comma after the salutation.

The BODY of the letter, of course, is the part that has the message you are sending. The letter above has only one paragraph, but you might want to write a letter with two or more paragraphs. They are punctuated just like any paragraph.

The CLOSING is a way of saying "Goodbye." Notice that a comma follows the closing. There are many different closings that are used. To a very close friend or relative you might close with "Love." Others are "Affectionately," "As Ever," "Always," "Sincerely."

The SIGNATURE is the name of the person writing the letter. Even if a letter is typed, the signature should be signed.

Here is how Joe addressed the envelope for the letter to his friend Bill.



Notice how the addresses are punctuated. The number after the name of the state is the zip code number. It is used to help the post office sort the mail and get it where it is going more quickly. Every address in the United States has a zip code. Do you know what yours is?

Now here is a business letter Joe Carson wrote to the mayor of his town. He doesn't know the mayor and he wants to be very polite.

1425 Wood Ave.
Crowville, California 92570
March 5, 1972

INSIDE ADDRESS → Mr. Carl Smith, Mayor
Crowville City Hall
Crowville, California 92573

Dear Mayor Smith:

Our class is studying how our city government works. We would like to attend a meeting of the city council.

Could you give us permission to attend and tell us when would be a good time?

Sincerely yours,

Joe Carson

Joe Carson

The business letter has one more part than the personal letter: the INSIDE ADDRESS. It is the address of the person the letter goes to. In fact, it is just like the address that goes on the envelope.

If business letters are typed, the name of the person writing the letter is typed out and the signature is written above the typed name.

In business letters, a colon is used after the salutation. If we happen to write to a company or business and don't know the name of the person who will handle the letter, we can write

Gentlemen:

Other salutations often used in business letters are

Dear Sir:

Dear Madam:

If the name of the person is not known, it is of course not included in the inside address or on the envelope. Here is a letter of that kind.

1425 Wood Ave.
Crowville, California 92570
March 5, 1972

Bell Telephone Co.
2467 Third Ave., N. E.
Crowville, California 92571

Gentlemen:

Our class is studying communication systems. Could you send us any material about telephone systems that you think we could use? Thank you.

Sincerely yours,
Joe Carson
Joe Carson

And here is the way the envelope would look:

Joe Carson
1425 Wood Ave.
Crowville, California 97570

Bell Telephone Co.
2467 Third Ave., N. E.
Crowville, California 92571

Exercise for Practice

1. Write a personal letter to a friend or relative. Include the five main parts. Also address the envelope correctly.

2. Write a letter to the principal of your school inviting him to visit your class for a special occasion.

3. Write to some business in your community asking for permission to visit.

4. Pretend you have just come home from visiting a friend in another town. Write to him thanking him for a good time.

5. Now write to your friend's mother thanking her for the good time you had in her home.